Applic. No. 10/689,973
Amdt. dated June 6, 2006
Reply to Office action of March 8, 2006

Claim Amendments

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claim 1 (cancelled).

Claim 2 (currently amended): The machine according to claim [[1]] 19, further comprising guide vanes provided in said flow ducts.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The machine according to claim [[1]] 19, wherein said slots are disposed symmetrically with respect to a line of symmetry.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The machine according to claim [[1]] 19, wherein said air passage openings include waste-air openings assigned to said slots.

Claim 5 (original): The machine according to claim 4, wherein said waste-air openings are waste-air slots.

Claim 6 (original): The machine according to claim 4, wherein said waste-air openings, on a side of said sheet-guiding

device facing away from said sheet-guiding surface, are in communication with the atmosphere.

Claim 7 (original): The machine according to claim 4, further comprising a vacuum generator for acting upon said waste-air openings.

Claims 8-9 (cancelled).

Claim 10 (currently amended): The machine according to claim [[1]] 19, wherein said slots are inclined with respect to said sheet travel direction.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The machine according to claim [[1]] 19, wherein said slots are oriented in said sheet travel direction.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The machine according to claim [[1]] 19, wherein said slots have a width varying along the length thereof.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The machine according to claim [[1]] 19, wherein said slots have a variable width.

Claim 14 (currently amended): The machine according to claim [[1]] 19, wherein said slots are respectively disposed repeatedly on both sides of a line of symmetry extending in said sheet travel direction, said line of symmetry having a central location with respect to said sheet guiding surface.

Claim 15 (original): The machine according to claim 14, wherein said slots have different lengths.

Claim 16 (currently amended): The machine according to claim [[1]] 19, wherein said blast-air supply system has chambers respectively communicating with said slots.

Claim 17 (currently amended): The machine according to claim [[1]] 19, further comprising a multiple configuration of said slots to be acted upon individually with blast air.

Claim 18 (currently amended): The machine according to claim [[1]] 19, further comprising waste-air openings and blowers assigned to said slots and having suction sides communicating with said waste-air openings and pressure sides communicating with said slots.

Claim 19 (previously presented): A sheet-processing machine, comprising:

a blast or blown-air supply system; and

a pneumatic sheet-guiding device connected to said blast or blown-air supply system;

said sheet-guiding device having flow ducts for aligning sheet-carrying air flows, said flow ducts having guide vanes and throttles or restrictors disposed therein;

said sheet-guiding device having a sheet-guiding surface;

said sheet-guiding surface having air passage openings formed therein for sheets being dragged over said air passage openings in a sheet travel direction and for expelling said sheet-carrying air flows during operation;

said air passage openings in said sheet-guiding surface forming opening cross-sections of said flow ducts, said opening cross-sections being slots having a length and a width, said length being multiple times greater than said width.

Claim 20 (original): The machine according to claim 19, wherein said throttles or restrictors are formed of air-permeable material.

Claim 21 (cancelled).